
TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Ministry-at-Large in Lowell.

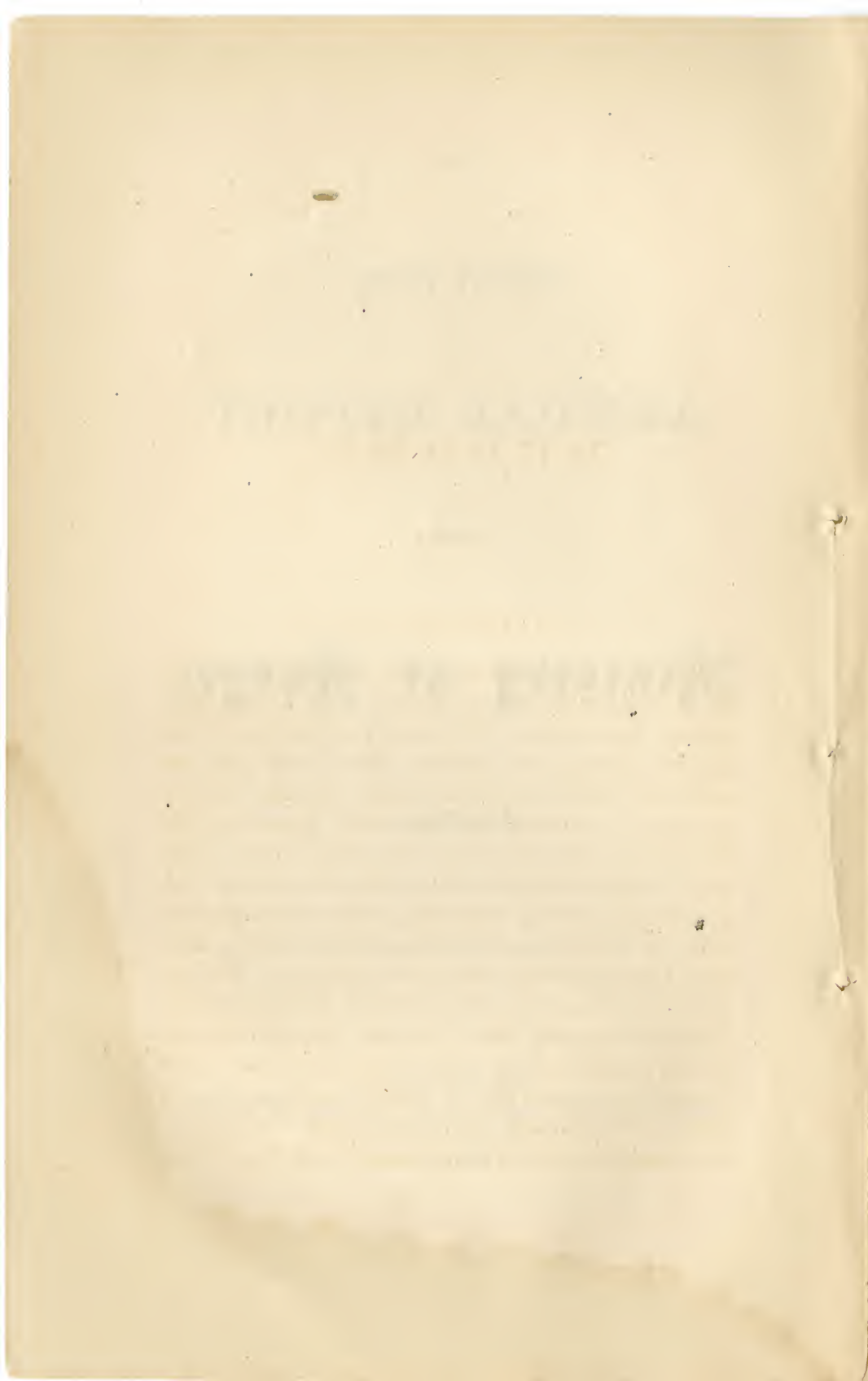
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LOWELL:
CITIZEN & NEWS PRESS, KNAPP & MOREY, PRINTERS,
44 Central Street.
1870.



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REPORT.

INTRODUCTION.

It is with great diffidence that we present to you the Twenty-Fifth Annual Report of the Lowell Missionary Association. This being the first year of our ministry among you, together with the fact of our somewhat limited experience when we came hither, it cannot be expected that we should present a very full and accurate account of our year's labors. The work to which we have laid our hands is diverse and complicated, and no reasonable person would suppose, even for a moment, that we should in so short a time have become initiated into all its mysteries. So soon as we took upon ourselves the duties and responsibilities of our present office, it became important for us to study man, and our year's experience has tended to convince us that few of us know much concerning him. Thus, instead of our becoming "puffed up" and imagining that we understand every department

of our work, we must confess before you, that we feel strangely humiliated. Still we do not think that we have lost one particle of that burning desire to do good, with which we commenced our labors here. We entered upon our work with a deep faith, even in degraded man, and we came among you, if haply we might do something for his uplifting. We have during the past year, made that our great object, and so long as we remain with you it must continue to be our sole aim. Still we have often been made painfully conscious of the fact that many in our midst have not that lofty purpose in view. Some persons seem to think that the objects of a Ministry at Large are very different from those of any other Christian Ministry. For ourself, we consider that our aim is identical with that of any other Christian Minister, namely: to make good christians and good citizens of those among whom we labor. And permit us further to state, though what we say is opposed to the commonly received idea, that there is no higher work to which a man can lay his hands, than the Ministry at Large. If that physician is the best who cures the worst of cases, so is that minister the highest, at least in God's sight, who elevates the most degraded of mankind. If it was noble in Christ to labor for the ignorant and lowly, it must be noble in us or any one else to do the same thing. Indeed, rob us of these lofty conceptions of our objects and duties, and in less than one hour we should cease to be a Minister at Large.

The above explanation of our views and aims may enable you more fully to comprehend and appreciate

what may have to come. We shall strive to be as exact and concise as we possibly can, and as we introduce and describe to you the various departments of our work, we shall make a few observations on what we consider the best way of doing that work. This is important since it is very necessary that we understand each other, and if possible have similar aims.

We entered upon our duties as Minister at Large in Lowell, January 1st, 1869. Through the winter of that year, trade was anything but brisk, and many were out of employment. Consequently the demands upon the Ministry were more numerous and urgent than they otherwise would have been. The spring, however, brought better prospects, and not a few engaged in farm labor, while others obtained work in the city. Thus, through the summer, there were comparatively few calls upon our charity. But when the present winter set in, there seemed to be a sudden depression in business; many were thrown out of employment, and the labor market has been greatly overstocked ever since. This is the predicament we are in at present, and it is a sad one, since about the worst misfortune that can befall the poor, is to be out of employment, for labor is to them their capital and support, and if that be taken away from them, it effects them vitally.

CHARITIES.

During the year there have been 1,018 applications for relief. Out of that number, 875 were aided, and 143 were, for various reasons, refused. The number of American applicants was 415, they representing 54 families. The English applicants numbered 270, representing 42 families. From the Scotch, 167 applications were made, from 10 families. From the Irish, 155 applications came from 43 families, 18 of whom were protestants. From French Canadians, 6 applicants were sent, representing 3 families. Four persons from the British Provinces applied; also one Indian. This gives us the following totals: Protestants, 966; Catholics, 52; families, 157.

It may be necessary to state in reference to the above statistics, that out of the 143 refused, the majority were deemed unworthy, while others were referred to the city authorities, to the Grand Army of the Republic, to the Scotch Friendly Society, and to other churches. Lest it should seem strange to many, that there should have been 167 Scotch applications from only 10 families, we will state that there are some two or three large and very poor Scotch families, who have applied to us frequently during the year for little articles of clothing, &c. We have several times conferred with the secretary of the Scotch Friendly Society, respecting these matters, and would, at any time, have willingly given up such families to their charge, but the society being in its infancy, it could not receive them as its own, though it has given them occasional aid. We may further

state, at this juncture, that we shall consider it our duty to do all in our power, henceforth, to lessen the number of applications, not only of Scotch, but of every other nationality. This conferring of trifles on the thriftless and wasteful, may be expedient, but to act towards the truly worthy and frugal in the same manner, is to endanger their independence and morality. Every honest man is ashamed to beg, and it will be his last resort, but if you compel a man to apply often for relief in consequence of your doling out to him a meal at a time, you encourage in him a pauper spirit ; for who does not know that familiarity will make the hardest things easy ? For ourself we are persuaded that this bestowing in small quantities increases rather than decreases pauperism, and that the policy which virtually says help each individual applicant as little as possible, but help as many as you can, *is false*. Such a system of giving never did much towards ameliorating the condition of a poor family, though it might have been a means of precarious subsistence to many, which, of course, is not at all to be desired, since the more protracted the aid given, the more dependent are those aided likely to become. If anything is to be accomplished, "either in the world of matter or in the world of man," it must be done by a concentration, and not by a scattering of forces. It is all the more necessary that we should act upon this principle of concentration, because our means are limited, and although "the harvest is truly plentiful, the laborers are very, *very* few."

The receipts last year on the charity account, were

\$740.70; the expenditures were \$530.40; balance on hand, \$210.30. The table given below shows from what sources the money came, and how it has been expended.

RECEIPTS ON THE CHARITY ACCOUNT.

Balance from last year.....	\$4 66	
Proceeds of a Concert.....	104 15	
Unitarian Society collection.....	95 60	
Social Festival at D. S. Richardson's.....	100 00	
Social Festival at G. F. Richardson's.....	90 00	
Social Festival at C. B. Coburn's.....	50 00	
Interest of Dalton Fund.....	87 00	
Dalton Thanksgiving Fund.....	10 00	
Interest of Holbrook Fund.....	28 50	
Other contributions in money.....	170 79	
	<hr/>	
Total.....		\$740 70

EXPENDITURES ON THE CHARITY ACCOUNT.

Provisions.....	\$158 91	
Shoes.....	145 30	
Wood.....	135 95	
Other charity expenses.....	90 24	
	<hr/>	
Total.....		530 40
		<hr/>
Balance		\$210 30

The above receipts and expenditures do not include \$276.00 raised by private subscriptions for new organ, \$22.00 for chorister, and \$47.00, the proceeds of an exhibition, which have been used in purchasing new curtains for the Chapel, and new singing-books for the Sabbath-school.

RECEIPTS ON THE GENERAL ACCOUNT.

Balance from last year.....	\$81 89
Annual subscriptions.....	775 00
Interest on deposits.....	13 45
From corporations.....	1,068 00
Total.....	<u>\$1,938 34</u>

EXPENDITURES ON THE GENERAL ACCOUNT.

Minister's salary.....	\$1,141 64
Assistant's salary.....	114 00
Printing the Twenty-Fourth Annual Report..	125 02
Other printing, stove and repairs.....	72 60
Collecting annual subscriptions, gas, fuel, and other sundry expenses.....	243 17
Total.....	<u>1,696 43</u>
Balance.....	<u>\$241 91</u>

EMPLOYMENT OFFICE.

It is impossible for us to state how many persons have applied to us for work during the year. However, we have been instrumental in obtaining housework for some seventy or eighty women, and have secured employment for about a dozen men. We are sorry to be compelled to declare that our calls for this kind of aid have not been responded to as they might have been. It is most true that the principal reason may have been because every branch of industry has been overstocked with laborers, but we also feel that it has in part been due to a want of appreciation of this most important department of our work. There is no way of assisting the poor which is so permanent and effective, and at the same time so free from dangers and objections, as the procuring

of employment for them. It places them at once in a position to help themselves. We trust that persons of influence will do all in their power to aid us in conducting this branch of our work to a successful issue. We consider that any individual who should become instrumental in securing permanent employment for six poor men during the present year, would, in all probability, do more real good than would any one subscriber by increasing his donation ten-fold.

EVENING SCHOOLS.

When we were engaged as Minister-at-Large in this city, it was understood that we should conduct evening schools, as did our predecessor. But we were convinced, from the commencement, that the teaching of writing and arithmetic belonged to the school-master, rather than to us, and that it was the duty of the city to take in charge the ignorant around us. We at once made known our views to the Board of Directors and were happy to find that they not only endorsed them, but immediately appointed Mr. E. B. Patch to confer with the city school committee respecting the propriety of their taking upon themselves the responsibility of conducting Evening Schools. It resulted as we had anticipated. The city took in charge the schools, appointed professional teachers, and is now conducting those schools far more efficiently than we could ever have hoped to have done with the uncertain aid of voluntary teachers. We most heartily thank all concerned in bringing about this most desirable consummation.

VISITING.

We have made upwards of nine hundred visits during the year. We have had ample opportunities of serving those upon whom we have called. The poor have, necessarily, many trials and cares, and they are almost constantly in need of advice and consolation. In many instances the presence of the minister, alone, seems equal to the removing of sorrow, and the reading of a chapter, the offering of a short prayer, or a word of cheer will extend its wholesome influence over many a long and weary day. By these means, together with the conversations the minister may hold with them concerning their daily affairs, he wins his way, perhaps, slowly but surely to their hearts, and prepares them for the reception of christian truth. But we are not of those who believe that it is well to visit the poor every day in the week, or every hour in the day. They have rights as well as the rich, which must not be ignored. They have home sanctities which cannot be invaded with impunity. Besides, a minister can make himself too common and familiar, as well as another. When his visits are too frequent, those to whom they are paid, cease to regard them as benefits, they lose respect for him, and his influence for good is at an end.

THE CHAPEL.

When we entered upon our labors here, we considered it advisable to make certain changes, both in the Chapel and in the Sunday-school. Previous to

our coming, there were two chapel services, and we dispensed with one, and instead of having one session of Sunday-school, we now have two, one in the morning, and another in the afternoon. By this change, we believe that we secured a better attendance on divine service in the afternoon, while it also gave us more leisure and energy to devote to the young, in whom is our greatest hope. As might have been expected, the attendance on the Chapel services has been fluctuating. There have been as many as one hundred adult persons present, while on a hot or rainy day, the number has not exceeded twenty. So far as we are able to judge, there has been an average attendance of about forty adults, and from forty to fifty children who are always present, wet or fair.

We cannot allow this opportunity to pass without saying that we think that the Chapel has hitherto been too much neglected. Those who have the management of it, and, indeed, all who are considered to aid in its support, ought to have a deeper personal interest in its welfare. It seems to have been presumed that we can get along with anything at the Chapel, and that the services need not be made attractive. Every rule of the Association, which has direct reference to the Chapel, is calculated to hinder its progress. We have, in consequence of this, during a considerable portion of the year, been compelled, in addition to our other duties, to do the work of sexton and chorister as well. When we had a chorister we had to beg money in order to pay him. These above mentioned rules might have been per-

fectly in order, providing we could have calculated on the voluntary services of others, but, strange as it may appear, the fact is that, notwithstanding the pure, lofty and unsectarian aims of this ministry, we have not a single right hand man. We do not blame any one for this, for we must put the most charitable construction on the whole affair, and suppose that it has been due either to ignorance of the real condition of things, or of the true objects of a Ministry-at-Large. It does not mend the matter to say that this is done in order that the poor may be fed, for that makes a man's body of more account than his soul, an idea which needs only to be asserted to be rejected. We feel constrained to say that we have begun at the wrong end of this work. We tamper with effects, and not with causes. Hunger is an effect, and not a cause, and we must remove the cause before the effect will disappear. Pauperism has for centuries increased just in proportion with the number of charitable institutions, and perhaps all because a proper remedy has not been applied to it. Intellectual and moral destitution are at the root of almost all the poverty existing in our midst, and before we can do anything towards its effectual removal, we must elevate the impoverished. This nothing can do so thoroughly as the Christian religion. It goes down to the very springs of our existence, and purifies them. But even this, if not properly applied, must fail of its end. The poverty-stricken are generally as poor, intellectually and morally, as they are physically. Thus the object of a Ministry-at-Large ought to be, not only to provide for the physical

wants of the poor, but above every other thing, to supply their intellectual, moral and spiritual needs.

SUNDAY SCHOOL.

The Sunday-school numbers ten teachers and ninety-four scholars. In consequence of the occasional absence of some of the teachers, and having had an assistant superintendent only a portion of the time, the roll books have not been properly kept, and therefore the average attendance cannot now be exactly given. But we think we are safe in stating that it has been as good as that of any school in the city. Many of our children have been present at every chapel service and both sessions of Sunday-school through the year. The school has gradually increased in numbers and interest for eight or ten months past, and continues to do so. We have had seven Sunday-school concerts, all of which were well attended, and it is not enough to say that the children acquitted themselves well on every occasion. We have had one exhibition, which was quite a success, the proceeds of which amounted to nearly \$50.00. We have, during the year, had four parties for the children: a Washington's Birth-day party, a Strawberry Festival, a Fruit Festival, and a Christmas party, all of which were eminently successful. We have, likewise, in connection with the school, a Temperance Band of Hope, which numbers sixty-eight members, almost all of whom are children of the school. We have a School Library of upwards of three hundred volumes, though, unfortunately,

most of the books are ill-adapted to the requirements of the children. We have received gifts of books during the year, from several of our teachers, and quite a number have been sent from the Unitarian Sunday-school. Still we need a much larger and better library, and what is more, we deserve one. To some degree, steps have been taken to secure that object. The children of the Unitarian Sunday-school collect their pennies weekly, to be devoted to the purchasing of books for the Free Chapel. The self-denial of these blessed little ones, from time to time, has done more to cheer and encourage us on in our work than anything else which has transpired since our coming here.

The total number of books taken out of the library during the year cannot be given, because for the first six months of the year we had no regular librarian, and therefore no account was kept. However, at the beginning of June last, Mrs. Samuel G. Raymond volunteered her services, and she has attended to the work ever since, having her son as assistant. She is a most indefatigable worker, and this department is now well conducted. Her statement is, that during the six months she has been librarian, upwards of 600 books have been taken out of the library. All things considered, this is very encouraging indeed.

The Bible-class has been continued by Miss L. E. Penhallow, with similar results of years past. Still we must say that the devotion of its leader merits better outward success.

Under the head of Sunday-school may be mentioned our Sewing-class for little girls. Last winter

it was ably conducted by Mrs. Sidney Spaulding ; this winter it is under the efficient superintendence of Mrs. John F. Kimball. Young ladies from the Unitarian church have assisted in this most interesting and desirable work. There has been an average attendance of forty children. We return our most sincere thanks to all who have been or are engaged in instructing these neglected little ones.

We must not forget, in this connection, to return our best thanks to the ladies of the Unitarian Sewing Society, for the three hundred articles of clothing received during the year, from their hands. Had it not been for *their* self-denying efforts, the pressing needs of the poor under our ministration must have remained unsupplied. Their devotion to this object is worthy of all praise. The position of almoner is one of comparative ease. But when the question of individual effort is concerned, the matter assumes a different aspect. The members of this society have not been satisfied with giving mere donations of money, but have, in addition, sacrificed their time and energy in this benevolent cause. *May others follow their example.*

We would also acknowledge the reception of valuable contributions of clothing from Mrs. Tufts, Mrs. Talbot, Miss Susie Wright, and others, which have been so bestowed as to save a large amount of suffering.

Thanks are also due to the various teachers and other co-laborers in our Sunday-school, who have so nobly seconded our efforts during the past year. When so much is due to all, it may seem unnecessary

comparison to mention individuals, But we cannot allow this opportunity to pass without acknowledging the peculiar obligations under which we are placed by the services of Mrs. C. J. Darracott, to whose indefatigable exertions we are chiefly indebted for our new organ, whose cheering melody has supplied a want long felt in our Chapel. We must not omit to mention in this connection the liberal donation from the Second Universalist church for the same object. We are also exceedingly grateful to those friends without whom our organ must have remained a silent accessory. We would bear our testimony to the devotedness of our organists, the Misses Sawyer, Fiske, and Shepherd. The zealous co-operation of our assistant, Mrs. Merriam, cannot be too highly commended. We would also acknowledge our obligation to Mr. Joseph Slater for valuable services rendered by him. To one and all, teachers and friends, without whom our efforts must have been vain, we gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness. It is our earnest prayer that they may be long spared to aid in this good work.

We have previously intimated that one of the great demands of our ministry is more personal effort. Every individual concerned should feel that the needy poor have actual claims upon him which the mere investment of money cannot meet. We must become more thoroughly alive to the importance, sacredness, and magnitude, of the work in which we are engaged. The delusion exists in this community (as perhaps in all others) that the employment of a minister removes the individual responsibility of the people.

This is a fatal error. The performance of moral obligations is never to be vicarious. Only the most unwearied personal endeavor can fully effect the moral and spiritual renovation of the people for whom we should conjointly labor. It is as impossible to employ another to perform these peculiar duties as it would be to make him our substitute in the living of a godly life. The sooner we become conscious of the personal character of the efforts demanded in this work, the sooner will our endeavors be crowned with success.

In concluding this imperfect report of our year's labors, we wish to express our cheerful anticipations of the future. The financial affairs of the association are promising. New channels have been opened for the accumulation of funds, and the amount thus accruing will enable us to extend the range of our operations, and must, at the same time, increase the zeal and enthusiasm of our coadjutors. We must now determine to preserve and augment mediums of prosperity. Let the grandeur of our purpose, the nobleness of our aim, inspire us to ardent emulation and generous impulse. We are engaged in a field demanding, it is true, much patient toil, but it is also one which cannot fail to yield abundant fruits. Philanthropy can never spend itself in vain. Though the unseen hand of benevolence may cast the seeds of love along the uncertain pathway, where thorns may choke, the birds devour, the stones refuse a lodgment, *some* will fall into good ground and bring forth an hundred fold. Let us have a watch-word, the

emblem of earnestness. Let it be, FIDELITY. The hand that gives, or withholds, unthinkingly, may confer blessings, but the hand that consecrates itself to work only in the employ of conscious Christian sympathy and love, will call down a double blessing on its owner from the Father of the fatherless and the widow's Friend.

Our work is one of self-sacrifice. It calls for quiet, unostentatious deeds. It bids us add to the cares of our own households, a brotherly and sisterly solicitude for our neighbors. It commands us to enter the highways and byways of want and misery; to carry the joys of aid and consolation. The world does not look on and applaud our actions. The trump of fame sounds no note of adulation before the silent approach of gentle charity. The love of gain finds no gratification in these humble walks. But the Christian graces are of themselves a higher guerdon than the hollow plaudits of men, or the decaying glitter of riches. Our hearts may swell at the recital of the hero's valorous deeds, and at the self-immolation of the saint, but all acts of glory and stoic relentlessness pale before the worthiness of him whose only purpose is the elevation of his kind. Exploits of heroism may serve to stir the young blood of enthusiasm, and the splendors of regal opulence may excite the vain glory of the children of Mammon, but the only deeds of true immortal worth are those of the disinterested, whose ebb of life chants the peaceful lay of recounted deeds of love.

The only real wealth is the consciousness of having
lived for others. These rewards shall survive

“When victors’ wreaths and *monarchs’ gems*,
Shall blend in common dust.”

Respectfully submitted.

J. H. COLLINS.

February 20th, 1870.

Directors of the Lowell Missionary Association.
1869-70.

JOHN C. PALFREY, PRESIDENT.

D. S. RICHARDSON,
REV. C. E. GRINNELL,
E. B. PATCH,

J. A. KNOWLES,
P. ANDERSON,
C. M. WILDER,

F. P. APPLETON.

A. E. BOWERS, SECRETARY.

M. G. HOWE, TREASURER.

APPENDIX.

The rules subjoined, were formed during the month of November, 1868, by a committee appointed for that purpose by the Directors of the Lowell Missionary Association, and were submitted to and adopted by the Association at its annual meeting. They are as follows :

It shall be the duty of the Minister-at-Large :
1st. To conduct public Sunday services in the Free Chapel. 2d. To direct and continue the Free Evening School. 3d. To dispense the property placed in his hands for charitable purposes ; and 4th, to befriend and assist the needy in every way in his power, and to the extent of his ability.

1st. The Sunday services shall be especially and exclusively fitted to the needy, and nothing further shall be attempted, calculated to attract other classes. The Sunday services shall be so conducted as to involve no expense, except for warming and lighting the Chapel. The Sunday services shall be of such a character as not to take up any of the Minister's week-day time in their preparation.

2d. The present system of administration of the Evening Schools having proved eminently efficient and profitable, shall be continued, with such improvements as may, from time to time, prove desirable. No change of plan shall be introduced till approved by the Board of Directors, after recommendation of the Minister-at-Large. In the conduct of the school, rigid economy shall be studied, and every possible benefit gained from the personal assistance of the charitable community.

3d. In his disbursements for charity, absolute discretion is left with the Minister. He will, however, keep a full record of all receipts, and of every assistance he gives, pecuniary or otherwise, with the circumstances in either and every case. This record, entire, shall be submitted to the Board of Directors whenever required by them. From this record the Minister shall prepare a full, accurate and intelligible financial analysis of all his receipts and expenditures during the preceding year, and another of the statistics of his services; and these two analyses shall be incorporated in his annual report. The financial statement, however, shall not be read in public or published till it has been submitted by the Minister to the Board of Directors, and by them declared to be "full, accurate, intelligible and satisfactory." If it shall not so prove to them, they shall call for the Minister's record, and prepare a financial report for themselves, which they shall approve, as above, before publishing.

It is understood that the Minister-at-Large has no authority to contract debts or anticipate receipts;

and it is hereby expressly forbidden that he shall, under any circumstances, make any payments, or incur any liabilities for which he has not funds available for the object, belonging to the ministry, immediately on hand; and it is established that a balance to his credit, on his account, at any time, shall be cause for summary dismissal.

The Minister-at-Large shall apply to the Board for funds, with an estimate of his needs, on the first of January and October of each year, and on the money received therefrom he shall base his expenditures for the intervening period, avoiding any other public appeals when possible.

4th. The most important and valuable services of the Minister, consists, not in disbursing others' means, but in his personal intercourse with the needy. Even in a pecuniary sense it is hoped and expected that he will benefit the community far beyond the total contribution for the ministry—salary included—by encouraging the despairing, advising the perplexed, teaching the ignorant, strengthening the weak, steadying the wavering, and raising the fallen. One pauper turned into a depositor in the Savings Bank, makes a saving to the city of his wages, or \$600 per annum. Few such men would make the Minister's contribution, even salary deducted, far larger than that of the rest of the city to the ministry.

Respectfully submitted.

JOHN C. PALFREY,	} <i>Committee.</i>
DANIEL S. RICHARDSON,	
CHARLES E. GRINNELL,	

